

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 01549 061710Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3571

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1549

EXDIS

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, LE, US
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: AMERICAN NON-MEDIATION

1. UPI BEIRUT REPORTED APRIL 5 THAT THE "U.S. AMBASSADOR RICHARD PARKER MET WITH FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTER FUAD BOUTROS YESTERDAY IN WHAT WAS SEEN AS AN EFFORT TO DEFUSE THE POSSIBILITY OF A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT DUE TO THE SYRIAN AND ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT." ON APRIL 6 IT REPORTED, "AS THE FIGHTING CONTINUED IN THE SOUTH, U.S. AMBASSADOR RICHARD PARKER MET WITH GEN. VICTOR KHOURY, THE RECENTLY-APPOINTED COMMANDER OF THE LEBANESE ARMY. PARKER PRECEDED HIS TALKS WITH THE ARMY CHIEF BY A SESSION WITH FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTER FOUAD BOUTROS AND AT BOTH MEETINGS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY AN AMERICAN MILITARY ATTACHE."

2. IMPLICATION THESE ARTICLES, AND OF VARIOUS COMMENTS IN BEIRUT PRESS, IS THAT I AM ENGAGED IN MEDIATION EFFORT. WISH ASSURE DEPARTMENT THIS IS NOT RPT NOT THE CASE. IN SPITE OF SECURITY WRAPS WHICH SEVERELY COMPLICATING MY MOVEMENTS, I AM CONTINUING
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TO MAKE COURTESY CALLS ON LEBANESE AND DIPLOMATIC PERSONALITIES. CALL WITH DATT ON KHOURY AND BOUTROS WAS IN THAT CATEGORY. IT WAS SET UP A WEEK AGO. CALL ON BOUTROS YESTERDAY WAS FOR WEEKLY TOUR D'HORIZON AND TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS. IT TRUE THAT IN BOTH MEETINGS WITH BOUTROS WE DISCUSSED SOUTH, BUT THAT IS SUBJECT OF THE DAY. IT WAS NOT DISCUSSED AT ALL WITH

KHOURY.

3. ASSUME UPI WILL ALSO REPORT THAT DCM LANE AND I AND OUR WIVES HAD FAMILY LUNCH WITH PHALANGE LEADER PIERRE GEMAYEL AT HIS HOUSE TODAY. THIS WILL BE INTERPRETED LOCALLY AS COMING WITHIN CONTEXT DISCUSSIONS ON SOUTH LEBANON, ALTHOUGH THAT SUBJECT BARELY MENTIONED. (CONVERSATION BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY.) LUNCH AGREED ON TWO WEEKS AGO AS PART OF EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH PHALANGE.

4. ASSUME UPI WILL ALSO REPORT IN SIMILAR FASHION FACT THAT WE ARE HAVING MASSIVE LUNCH WITH CHAMOUNIST STALWART KAZEM KHALIL TOMORROW, ALSO SET UP SOME TIME AGO. THIS IS PART OF ORDEAL BY LUNCH WHICH IS FATE OF AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO LEBANON. KHALIL WILL PROBABLY HAVE CHAMOUN THERE AND THIS WILL INEVITABLY LEAD TO SPECULATION LOCALLY THAT ANOTHER STEP HAS BEEN TAKEN IN MEDIATION EFFORT.

5. NO MORE POLITICAL LUNCHESS PLANNED FOR MOMENT, BUT FACT I HAVE ACCEPTED THESE TWO IS LIKELY TO MEAN SPATE OF SUCH INVITATIONS IN COMING WEEKS. WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED OF ANY SIGNIFICANT CONVERSATIONS WHICH OCCUR DURING THEM.

6. DEPARTMENT MAY BE SURE THAT I HAVE NO INTENTION ENGAGING IN MEDIATION EFFORT UNLESS SO INSTRUCTED. AT SAME TIME, GIVEN MYTHICAL ROLE OF AMERICAN
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AMBASSADOR IN LEBANON AND UNPARALLELED IMAGINATION OF PRESS IN LEBANON, THERE NO WAY TO AVOID SPECULATION SUCH AS THAT REPORTED ABOVE SHORT OF STAYING HOME ALL DAY AND SEEING NO ONE.
PARKER

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NNN

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